

F U Maggott

The last person that comes to mind was an odd guy who called himself F.U. Maggott . He didn't have a practice room there or even played an instrument but he always seemed to be around. Not just at the Rialto but all around the city. In bars and in every clubs and places to eat. Downtown just hanging around and seeing if anything was going on. He knew all the cops and most by their first name.

Several important people at city hall and the Library seem to know him well when they saw him but many called him a different first name like he had told different people a different first name. He always preferred to be called F U by everyone else.

Some would call him Frank or Franklin. Some called him Fred or Felix. It seemed to always start with the letter F and there was maybe five that was used including Floyd and Friz. A few of us musicians from the Rialto were talking about it one night at Espresso's our favorite place to eat that had the best Italian pizza in Lowell.

We came to think that F U gave different people a different first name so he could keep track of what type or kind of spin he told about himself to each group of people. What he did for real living to make money. Where did he come from in his past. How old he was. Did he live in Lowell. No one ever followed him home or notice when he left. Sometimes it seemed that he never ate or drank anything or ever went to the bathroom. So from then on the five of us took notice to if he ever did any of those regular functions. We kept track for over a year. We would offer him food or drink and he always declined and said he was all set. We tried to follow him home to see where he live but he would either leave without someone noticing him leave or if you did see him leave and followed him he would always lose you.

After a while we gave up and just figured he wanted to be private and left to his own world. Besides he was a decent person who was always at all the music events and art galleries. If you were collecting for a good reason he would always give.

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Sometime he would listen to our worst problems for hours. He also put in a good word to help whoever was in trouble or going through difficult times. Sometimes he was like a manager Sometimes like your biggest supporter . One even he seemed lost somehow and after night

we never saw him again and he had been around us for several important years. A jam had finished and we were just chilling out. For some reason someone asked him if he came a family that was well off because it seem for his behavior that's where he started in life. For the first time in our association with him he talked about himself. He said his family was steeped in poverty and the only way for him to survive was to get away from his family as soon as he could. He was sixteen when he left. He felt bad because his family needed him more than ever when he left and didn't do well after he was gone. His father didn't read or write and never had an occupation so he lived off his mother and step father before they went into a nursing home. His father was a heavy drinker that he had picked by from his step father. Later on in life I found out he was a bastard child who's real father came from a well known important family going back 35 generations. When I left my fathers home I rarely saw him the first year I was gone and not until almost ten years later when a childhood friend saw me and told him were I lived in Lowell and I saw him again. It had been over five years since I had been last committed to a mental institution and was now doing well .

He had been committed three times in what he believed was the cause all along . His guilt for abandoning his father when he could have helped him out. He ended the story by explaining that if he would had stayed he might have carried on the habits and lifestyle of his father and that scared him more than anything. His father never thought much about the past once he was back seeing his only son again and knowing where he was and never seemed to hold it against him.

He grew up being ashamed and embarrassed by his father but that day when he saw him again he found he no longer had shame for the man who would do anything for his son and was always proud of anything he accomplished in life.

He said he came out from where he was in life to build a life for himself in Lowell, and be around creative imaginative people which included artists, musicians or anyone who wanted to break out from the hum drum of ordinary life and find their place or at least be helpful and useful in some way whenever he can.

Another thing that helped shape his being and escape the life he wanted to avoid to prevent his past from becoming his future was reading. He collected books like other people collected records or stamps. It began with a fondness for books on Zen and Tibetan Buddhism. He found

practices and guidelines that resonated with him like nothing else in his life ever had. He was always surprised to find that Lowellians that were supposedly deeply influenced and involved with Zen outlook and read some Buddhist text but were not really following obvious and essential practices like picking up trash, which he did all the time while walking around in Lowell.

It was something that few hardcore homespun and homemade readers of Zen followed or adapted or even knew about or would think about. It's rather simple and starts with just picking up trash on the street as you walk along. You don't have to go crazy but every little bit helps. Imagine if everyone did it or even some did it. The city would look better and people would be more involved and take real pride in their city.

Most of the time it's just a can or bottle, maybe a bag or other trash. Hey if you pick up a bag then you can use that to collect trash as you go. Don't worry about carrying the trash. There are trash cans all around the city. The rule is you carry as much as you can, maybe an item or two until you get to a trash receptacle.

F U Maggott told us he never bothered to make a fuss or making notice of his activities to help anyone whenever he could to the supposed Zenheads living in Lowell. No man can change the nature of another.

The really hidden past that no one ever knew about that was the truth about his father that he was ashamed to put out there was that he was an only son of a father who molested his three younger sisters and he was the one that helped put his father in prison when he was only fifteen years old so it kinda messed him up but he overcame it the best he could and helping others always made the pain and memory of what he had to do go away and be felt less and less. His new start in Lowell helped erase and ease that tragic experience. His eyes were a little red for the first time we had ever seen before he said that being in Lowell and being accepted by us and all the others that helped make him the person he was today and would be forever. He couldn't think of a better place than Lowell with all the wonderful caring honest people who he considers friends who he got to know

and who finally got to know him. We never saw him again after that night but he left a bundle of books that he had in a duffel bag. We all shared them and to honor his memory we followed what we read as best we could.